

**WEST BRANCH SCHOOLS
STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCEDURES**

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WELCOME

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you as a West Branch student. Our schools have a wide variety of instructional programs and student activities. Please take advantage of the numerous opportunities available to you.

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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Teachers and staff strive to motivate and encourage students to learn and excel to their maximum potential. Intervention is implemented to intervene with and enrich all students. Open communication is essential among all who are involved with the education of students.

ACADEMIC PROBLEMS

Classroom teachers are available to help students with problems that may arise in regard to grades. Students should request help from their teachers when they feel they are having difficulties. It is the student's responsibility to check with his/her teachers concerning required make-up work after returning to school from a period of absence. Mid-term progress reports will be sent home with students at the middle of each grading period.

ATTENDANCE:

ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

1. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds after they arrive at school unless the office grants permission.
2. Students who need to leave school during the day should bring to school a note addressed to the Principal and signed by a parent/guardian, stating the reason for leaving and the time the parent/guardian will pick up the child at the school office. If a child is to leave school by means other than the school bus or the parents' automobile, the parent/guardian must grant permission. The parent/guardian picking up the child must come to the main office and sign the child out of school.
3. The parent/guardian of any student that is absent is required to notify the school by phone before 10:00 am on the day of the absence. An answering machine will record your message 24 hours a day. Failure to do so results in an unexcused absence for your child. The school will attempt to notify each parent who did not call their child off for the day. A written excuse signed by the parent/guardian of a student absent for all or part of a day must be submitted to the Office in compliance with the Missing Child Act. Failure to submit a written excuse within 48 hours of the absence will result in an unexcused absence. Please note that a written excuse does not guarantee an excused absence. See "Reasons for Absence" for acceptable reasons to be considered an excused absence. Students who are absent may not attend school activities that same night.
4. In the case of prolonged absence, the parent/guardian should contact the school office to make arrangements for picking up the child's assignments and books. Teachers will try to update web pages and/or voice mail with daily homework assignments.
5. After the tardy bell rings, all students must enter and exit the building through the school office.
6. For attendance purposes, the following guidelines will be in effect, a written excuse is required for all absences and tardies:

Elementary Schools:

- a. Students who arrive at school after 9:00 and before 10:00 will be marked as Tardy.
- b. Students who arrive at school between 10:00 and 2:00 will be counted absent for a half day. Students who leave school between 10:30 and 2:30 will be counted absent for a half day.
- c. A full day of attendance may be granted for any student who leaves school after 11:00 and returns by 1:00. A medical excuse is required upon return. Students who leave at any other time of the day and return within an hour and a half will not be counted as absent and a medical excuse is required upon return.

Middle School and High School:

- a. Students who arrive at school after 9:00 will be counted as absent for am.
- b. A student must be present more than 1/2 of each class to be counted present for the entire class period.

State standards for Elementary and Secondary Schools establish minimum time allocations and requirements for all curricular offerings. The establishment of minimum time standards as basic requirements provides an implied measure of the hours necessary for credit or certification of completed course work.

ABSENCE POLICY

Any student who misses more than twenty (20) days of class in a year long course, or more than 10 days in a semester course, will receive no credit for the course in which he/she was enrolled during that year, unless the absences are due to prolonged illness or hospitalization and a medical excuse is presented to the Principal verifying such. The coursework must then be made up by the student within a reasonable length of time (determined by the teacher in which case the teacher may issue credit). The student/parent is responsible for making all the necessary arrangements for make-up work.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL AND HOMEROOM

Each student is assigned a homeroom where attendance is taken daily. Upon arrival at school students are to go to their locker, the restroom if necessary, and then immediately to their homeroom. Students are not permitted to loiter in the halls prior to the homeroom period.

DISMISSAL - END OF SCHOOL DAY

Students should walk directly to their assigned bus by way of the sidewalks. No running is permitted in the school, near the building, or in the bus loading area. These rules are for the protection and well being of all students.

EXCUSAL FROM ELEMENARY SCHOOLS

Students who must leave school during the school day must bring a note from home signed by the parent/guardian and present it to the Classroom Teacher before 9:00 a.m. Students who are excused to a doctor or dentist must return a doctor/dentist visit certificate to the Building Secretary. No student is allowed to leave school without office approval. Written verification will be required from the doctor, dentist, or place of appointment for the time away from school to be excused. Students are discouraged from leaving the building during school hours.

EXCUSAL FROM WEST BRANCH MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students who must leave school during the school day must bring a note from home signed by the parent or guardian and present it to their homeroom teacher during homeroom. Students will be issued a building pass excusing them from class at the requested time. At that time, the student should come to the office to meet the person they are leaving with and sign out. Students who are excused to a doctor or dentist must return a doctor/dentist visit certificate upon their return. If the student returns during the school day, they should report to the office to sign in and a pass will be issued to admit the student to class. No student is allowed to leave school without office approval.

EXCUSAL FROM HIGH SCHOOL

Students who must leave school during the school day must bring a note from home signed by the parent or guardian and present it to the Attendance Office before 7:45 a.m. (even if you are 18 years old). Students will be issued a building pass excusing them from school that day. A building pass may then be used in lieu of a green excused absence slip to return to classes. Students who are excused to a doctor or dentist must return a doctor/dentist visit certificate to the Attendance Office. No student is allowed to leave school without office approval.

A matter of convenience is not to be interpreted as an emergency situation. Students will not be excused from school by a phone call during the course of the day, unless it is an emergency. Written verification will be required from the doctor, dentist, or place of appointment for the time away from school to be excused. Students are discouraged from leaving the building during school hours. Excessive abuse may result in an office referral.

REASON FOR ABSENCE

Section 3301.69.02 of the Ohio Revised Code sets regulations governing excuses for past absence from school and they are as follows:

- personal illness
- illness in the family
- quarantine of the home
- death of a relative
- home work due to absence of parents or guardians
- observance of religious holidays
- emergency or set of circumstances which in the judgment of the school constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school.

All other reasons are considered unexcused absences.

Students with unexcused absences will not be permitted to make up missed work. All medical or written excuses to cover absenteeism must be turned in to the school within 48 hours of your absence.

TARDINESS TO CLASS FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

All students are expected to be in their seats when the bell sounds. Do not report to the office for a late pass to class.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

After 7:37 for Middle School, after 7:48 for High School, and after 9:00 a.m. for Elementary School, all students tardy to school must sign in at the main office upon their arrival. A written excuse will be required. A detention will be issued for an unexcused tardy. Additional tardiness will result in the following:

6 tardies - 1 detention

9 tardies - 2 detentions

12 tardies - In-school suspension and a possible Truancy Referral

15 tardies - Out of School suspension

TRUANCY

Truancy is an unexcused absence/tardy from school. Excessive absences may result in mandatory attendance meetings and/or court referral.

West Branch Local Schools will be holding mandatory attendance meetings. The gathering is an attempt to build awareness and reduce parent referrals to the courts. Failure to respond and attend may be viewed negatively by the courts in the event referrals are made.

Any student who accumulates 6 or more days of absence without medical documentation may be referred to a mandatory attendance meeting. Any student who accumulates 12 days or more of absence without medical documentation will be referred to a mandatory attendance meeting. Referral to County Juvenile Court on truancy charges will be made as deemed necessary. Disciplinary action may be taken at any of the mandatory attendance meetings.

VACATIONS

Students will not be excused for vacation unless their parents accompany them. This rule does not change when a student becomes 18. Students must arrange with the Principal one week in advance for all excused vacations. Students must make arrangements with their teachers for all make up work. If a vacation is not properly approved, the absence will be unexcused.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Students and/or parents must notify the office of the Principal 48 hours in advance of leaving the school district. The student must initiate such a withdrawal from school by written verification 24 hours in advance of withdrawal, from the parents or guardian. This information should be forwarded to the office of the Principal. The student will receive a withdrawal form, which will be taken to all classes for a teacher signature. This form indicates the student has turned in all books and owes no fees. This withdrawal form is then to be returned to the main office at the end of the school day. If the student moves and owes fines or fees at West Branch School, their records will not be forwarded until said obligations are fulfilled.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

School bus transportation is a privilege, not an absolute right. The school bus driver is charged with the responsibility of transporting students safely to and from school. Failure to obey the driver, acting in a fashion endangering other pupils, or distracting/harassing the driver or other students will result in loss of bus transportation. Drivers may only transport students to and from their assigned bus stop. Students will not be permitted to ride a bus other than the one to which they are assigned.

Section 3301.83.08 of the Ohio Revised Code states Pupil Management Policies that include...

- a. The School bus driver's authority and/or responsibility to maintain control of the pupils
- b. The pupil's right to "due process" as provided for by the policies and procedures of the educating agency.
- c. Pupil management and safety instruction policies shall include the following:
 1. Pupils shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive
 2. Pupils must wait in a location clear of traffic and away from the bus stops.
 3. Behavior at the school bus stop must not threaten life, limb, or property of any individual
 4. Pupils must go directly to an available or assigned seat so the bus may safely resume motion.
 5. Pupils must remain seated keeping aisles and exits clear.
 6. Pupils must observe classroom conduct and obey the driver promptly and respectfully.
 7. Pupils must not use profane language.
 8. Pupils must refrain from eating and drinking on the bus except as required for medical reasons.
 9. Pupils must not use tobacco on the bus.
 10. Pupils must not have alcohol or drugs in their possession on the bus except for prescription medication required for a student.
 11. Pupils must not throw or pass objects on, from, or into the bus.
 12. Pupils may carry on the bus only objects that can be held in their laps (see paragraph (J) of Rule 3301.83.20 of the Administrative Code.)
 13. Pupils must leave or board the bus at locations to which they have been assigned unless they have parental and administrative authorizations to do otherwise.
 14. Pupils must not put head or arms out of the bus windows.
 15. Guidelines will be formulated for the use and storage of equipment and other means of assistance required by preschool and special needs children.
 16. Drivers and bus aides must have access to appropriate information about the child to the degree that such information might affect safe transportation and medical well-being. This information must be available in the vehicle or readily accessible in the transportation office. All such information is strictly confidential.
- d. Suspension, expulsion, or immediate removal from bus
 1. The Superintendent or superintendent designees, or principals are authorized to suspend or remove pupils from school bus riding privileges.
 2. Immediate removal of a pupil from transportation is authorized. A pupil immediately removed from transportation must be given notice as soon as practical of a hearing which must be held within seventy-two hours of the removal. The notice shall also include the reason for removal. Immediate removal is authorized when the pupil's presence poses a danger to persons or property or a threat to the safe operation of the school bus. Length of time removed from ridership shall be in accordance with policies of the school bus owner.
 3. School bus drivers shall report in writing to the appropriate administrator all rule violations or conduct that justifies immediate removal, suspension, or expulsions.

4. Suspension or immediate removal of preschool and special needs children may require a modification of the above procedures and shall be accomplished in accordance with the law.

Bus Routes

Each student will be assigned one pick up location and one drop off location.

Late Bus

Students who arrive on a late bus are to report directly to the office so that necessary corrections in the absence report can be made. If the homeroom period is not over, directions will be given by hall duty teachers or the office concerning the procedure to be followed.

CAFETERIA AND LUNCH PROCEDURES

The school operates a cafeteria for all students to eat lunch. Students who bring their lunches should also eat in the cafeteria. Periods are designated for lunch. Students must remain in the cafeteria unless given permission to leave. Classes are in session throughout the school, thus hall traffic must be limited. No food or drink (with the exception of water) is to be carried from the cafeteria. Students are not permitted to use the pop machines during the lunch periods. Students are not permitted to leave school grounds at this time or any other time during the lunch periods.

CHEATING

Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated (test, quizzes, homework, etc.). A first offense will result in an "F" for the work in question. Parents and the administration will be notified of the incident. A second offense will result in a parent conference and failure for the nine weeks in the subject in which the offense occurred.

CHEMICAL ABUSE

PHILOSOPHY

All West Branch employees and Board of Education recognize that the use, and/or misuse, of drugs, alcohol, counterfeit drugs, inhalants, or other chemical substances represent a serious problem for the student, family, school, and community.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The possession, consumption, evidence of consumption, being under the influence of, transmission, sale, concealment, and solicitation of others in the use of alcoholic beverages, drugs of abuse, controlled substances, unauthorized drugs or substances purported to be such, and instruments or paraphernalia for their use are prohibited.

This rule is in effect during school, at any school sponsored events on school grounds, on a school bus or at a bus stop, in transit to or from school, at any other time when the school is being used by any school group, and off of the school grounds at any school sponsored activity, event, or function.

PROCEDURE

A. First Offense.

1. The Principal may suspend for a period of up to 10 days and recommend expulsion to the Superintendent.
2. Information and/or charges may be filed with the appropriate authorities.
3. The suspensions or expulsion may be modified upon presentation of evidence to the Superintendent or Principal that the following procedures (A, B, and C) have been followed:
 - A) The student and parent/guardian agree for the student to be evaluated, at their expense, by a trained chemical dependency professional for a professional opinion concerning the degree of use/misuse/addiction. (The school will make a list of acceptable agencies and/or physicians available to the parent/guardian).
 - B) The contracted agency or office will notify the Principal or his designee that the client has made contact and is willing to comply with the appropriate treatment process.
 - C) The student and parent/guardian must enter into and complete a behavior contract with the Principal or his designee that will place additional behavioral demands on the student during the course of the suspension/expulsion. Note: these procedures outlined in item three do not pertain to instances of sale or distribution of drugs or alcohol.
4. If the requirements in #3 A, B, and C are met, the suspension/expulsion will be expunged from the student's record at the end of the semester.
5. If at any time during the semester that the suspension/expulsion has been modified the student, in the opinion of the school, is not in compliance with the action required in #3 A, B, and C, the suspension/expulsion will be reinstated.

B. Second Offense

1. The Principal shall suspend the student for a period not to exceed ten (10) days and may recommend expulsion to the Superintendent.
2. Information and/or charges may be filed with the appropriate authorities.
3. Upon return to school the student shall participate in designated support groups.

SUPPLYING FOR SALE OF CHEMICAL (DRUGS/ALCOHOL)

- A. Supplying any drug or alcohol for sale will result in a ten (10) day suspension and a recommendation for expulsion will be sent to the Superintendent.
- B. Charges will be filed with the appropriate authorities.
- C. First Offense Procedures, 3 A, B, and C **above** do not apply in cases of sale or distribution.

VOLUNTEERING INFORMATION

A. If a student is experiencing a drug/alcohol problem and seeks out the help of any staff member, or if student volunteers information, that information will not be used against him/her in any disciplinary action provided the information for assistance occurs prior to any disciplinary proceedings.

Note: Prescription Drugs

Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician shall not be considered in violation of the rule so long as its use is only by the person for whom the prescription was written, is dispensed in conformance with school procedures and its use is per the instructions of the prescribing doctor.

COLLEGE VISITATION

Students are urged to make college visits during the summer break or other school vacations. However, when necessary a college visitation form may be obtained from a counselor and approved before a student visits a college. Only seniors and second semester juniors may be approved. The limit for such days is three.

CONDUCT CODE:

The purpose of this code is to provide guidelines and procedures governing student conduct and discipline in the West Branch Schools. This code has been adopted in compliance with the intent and procedures mandated by Ohio H. B. 421 to insure fair and equitable handling of suspension, expulsion and removal cases. The types of misconduct for which a pupil may be suspended, expelled, or removed from school are enumerated. Students in the school system have the responsibility to act in such a way that does not interfere with the rights or the educational opportunity afforded to all students.

Not all acts of misconduct can be listed. Misconduct will result in disciplinary action that could come in the form of detention, Saturday School, suspension, expulsion, and removal from school. Areas that can be used as general guidelines for defining misconduct are:

- A) Damage and/or vandalism to public or private property including buildings, grounds, buses, premises, and property.
- B) Theft of public school property and/or theft of private property at curricular or extra-curricular functions or at locations unrelated to the school if a school employee is affected.
- C) Assault, threats, intimidation, or causing or attempting to cause physical injury or harm to any student, teacher, or any other person or disruption of the educational process. (Assaults or threats directed toward school employees, even when not occurring on school property or at a school event, are punishable under Ohio law.)
- D) Possession, transmission, or use of any object or instrument that can be considered a weapon capable of inflicting bodily harm or violence, including fireworks and explosives.
- E) The use of profane, indecent, obscene, or disrespectful language, verbal or written, including the use of obscene gestures, signs, pictures, or any publications toward or in description of any student, teacher, or any other person.
- F) Insubordination or failure to comply promptly with the directions of teachers, student teachers, aides, bus drivers, Principals, or other school personnel in a position of authority and/or responsibility at both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Teachers are authorized to make rules that apply to their classes, study halls, and extra-curricular activities under their jurisdiction.
- G) Gambling/card playing on school premises.
- H) Smoking, possession, the use of tobacco in any form (snuff included), and lighters/matches are prohibited in school buildings, on school grounds, school buses, and at any school sponsored activity.
- I) Possession, consumption, transmission, sale, concealment, and solicitation of others in the use of alcoholic beverages, drugs of abuse, controlled substances, unauthorized drugs or substances purported to be such and instruments or paraphernalia for their use. Examples of drugs of abuse include, but are not limited to, narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, glue, cocaine, and other substances that could modify behavior. Unauthorized drugs are those prescription drugs which are not authorized by medical prescription from a licensed physician for the individual consuming them.
- J) Loitering at any time on school grounds, in buildings, in automobiles, on school property, or adjacent properties.
- K) Failure to comply with the Grooming and Dress Policy.
- L) Fighting, and/or complicity to a fight, among students while on school property, including buses or at any school-sponsored activity.
- M) Falsification of signatures (parent/guardian, school officials, or any other person) on any correspondence directed to the school or within the school operation. Falsification of data, dates, grades, addresses on school forms.
- N) Disruption of the school's operation by any act or report which indicates a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of an individual student or the student body (arson, tornado, bombing, and false reports of such). This includes smoke bombs & stink bombs.
- O) Failure to comply with the attendance laws of the State of Ohio and the rules of the school district.
- P) Truancy and/or repeated tardiness to school and/or classes.
- Q) Persistent disobedience and repeated violations of this code and the rules of this school.
- R) Violation of the Technology Policy.

Violations of these rules will result in disciplinary action against the offender(s). The administrative staff will determine the penalty for violations of these rules. Disciplinary action can include counseling, parental conferences, assignment of

additional work, rearrangement of class schedules, pre- or post-school detention, Saturday School, suspension both in and out of school (to a maximum of ten days per offense) and expulsion from school. The use of these discipline measures within the school system does not preclude the referral of offenders to the proper juvenile and adult law enforcement agencies.

DISCIPLINE

Students are expected to obey school rules and the directions of teachers and other school staff. Most discipline problems will be handled directly by the classroom teacher. However, a pupil who presents a major problem will be referred to the Principal. Discipline may take the form of detention, restriction of privileges, a parent conference, Saturday school, suspension from class or school or expulsion from school in severe cases.

DETENTION

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Rewards and Consequences will be assigned in accordance with the district-wide Positive Behavior System-“The Warrior Way.” Details of this system are distributed to students at the beginning of their year at WB.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: Students will be issued demerits for negative behavior. Reward activities will be available *quarterly* for those students that demonstrate positive behavior. A letter will be sent to parents when a student reaches five demerits in a grading period. A student who receives ten demerits will be issued an in-school suspension. Students will start with zero demerits at the beginning of each grading period. Demerits are issued for a violation listed in the code of conduct for students. Some examples of demerits are profanity, no homework, dress code, etc. Noon detention may be assigned for minor infractions. Students will attend quarterly reward activities for *receiving less than 10 demerits in a grading period*. The culminating grade level field trips at the end of the year will be based on the total number of demerits for the year. All students with less than 45 accumulative points will be eligible to attend this full day long reward activity.

HIGH SCHOOL: When detention is assigned, the student will be made aware of the reason for the detention as well as the date on which it is to be served. Assigned detentions are recorded. Detentions will be held in the ISS room during the week from 7:05-7:45 a.m. for morning detentions and from 2:55-3:35 p.m. for afternoon detentions. Transportation is the responsibility of the student and arrangements must be made in advance. Students will be allowed to reschedule a detention if an emergency prevents them from serving a detention at the scheduled time. All school rules are in effect during detention.

SATURDAY SCHOOL

Saturday School may be assigned to promote improved student behavior. Sessions will begin at 8:00 a.m. Students are responsible to bring their own materials and to be on task during the entire period. Failure to attend the assigned Saturday school may result in additional disciplinary action.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In-school Suspension will not exceed 10 school days. Students assigned to In-school Suspension will report to homeroom for attendance purposes. After homeroom, students will report to the specified room. Students will be responsible for completing all assigned work. Students are not permitted to talk or sleep. Lunch will be eaten in the In-school Suspension room. Failure to abide by the rules will result in additional disciplinary action. Students serving In-school Suspension may practice and/or participate in extra-curricular programs during the term of the suspension.

SUSPENSION

The Superintendent or the Principal may suspend a student from school for disciplinary reasons outlined in the student code of conduct. No period of suspension will be for more than 10 days. Suspension may extend beyond the current school year if it is greater than the number of days remaining in the school year. The Superintendent may apply any or all of the period of suspension to the following year.

The Superintendent may require a student to perform community service in conjunction with or in place of a suspension. The Board may adopt guidelines to permit the Superintendent to impose a community service requirement beyond the end of the school year in lieu of applying the suspension into the following school year. The guidelines listed below will be followed for all suspensions, including those of in-school suspension:

- 1) The student will be informed in writing of the reasons for the potential suspension.
- 2) The student will be provided an opportunity for an informal hearing to challenge the reason for the intended suspension and explain their actions.
- 3) An attempt will be made to notify parents or guardians by telephone if a suspension is issued.
- 4) Within 24 hours, a letter will be sent to the parent or guardian stating the specific reasons for the suspension and including notice of their right to appeal such action.
- 5) Notice of this suspension will be sent to the Superintendent, the Treasurer, and the Student’s school record (not for inclusion in the permanent record).
- 6) If the offense is one for which a school district may seek Permanent Exclusion, then the notice will contain that information.
- 7) Due process procedures, outlined above, do not include “in-school” suspensions. West Branch students under out of school suspension are not permitted to be on West Branch school property or to take part in or attend curricular or extra-curricular activities.

APPEAL PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION

Should a student who is 18 or older or a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) choose to appeal the suspension, he must do so within 5 days of the notice of suspension. The procedure for such will be provided in regulations approved by the Board. A verbatim record of the hearing will be kept. The hearing may be held in executive session at the request of the student, parent or guardian. The procedure to pursue such appeal will be governed by board policy. During the appeal, the student will not be permitted to attend school.

EXPULSION

RECOMMENDATION FOR EXPULSION MAY BE MADE FOR ANY SERIOUS INFRACTION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT. ALSO, THOSE STUDENTS WHO ACCUMULATE FOUR SUSPENSIONS FOR ANY REASON MAY BE RECOMMENDED FOR EXPULSION.

1. Only the Superintendent (or his designee during extended absence of the Superintendent) may expel.
2. The period of expulsion cannot exceed 80 school days, except in the case of violation of the board's dangerous weapons policy or bomb threats when a one (1) calendar year expulsion may be imposed.
3. The Superintendent or his designee must give the pupil and his/her parents written notice of the intention and reason to expel the student. The pupil and parent or representative have the opportunity to appear on request before the Superintendent or his designee to challenge the action or to otherwise explain the pupil's actions. The administrator cannot compel such hearing in the event the pupil and parent choose not to have a hearing.
4. The notice is to state the time and place to appear which must not be less than three days, or later than five days after the notice is given.
5. If the Superintendent grants an extension of time, he will notify all parties of the time and place.
6. The Superintendent will notify the parent and the Treasurer in writing within 24 hours.

APPEAL PROCEDURE FOR EXPULSION

1. A pupil or his/her parents may appeal the expulsion by the Superintendent to the Board. Such pupil or his/her parents may be represented and shall be granted a hearing before the Board of Education.
2. A verbatim (word for word) record is required.
3. No particular procedure for the hearing to follow is required.
4. Formal action to affirm, vacate, or modify the disciplinary action on the appeal may only be taken in "public" session.
5. The decision of the Board is further appealable to the Court of Common Pleas.

REMOVAL OF A DANGEROUS STUDENT

1. If a pupil's presence at a school sponsored event poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process or school function, the Superintendent, Principal, or Assistant Principal may remove the student from the premises.
2. A teacher may remove a student from curricular or extra-curricular activities under his/her supervision, but not from premises.
3. A due process hearing must be held within 72 hours after the removal.
 - a) Written notice of the hearing and the reason for the removal and any intended disciplinary action must be given to the pupil as soon as possible prior to the hearing. The pupil must have the opportunity to appear at the informal hearing before the Principal, Assistant Principal, Superintendent, or his designee, and the right to challenge the reason(s) for the intended suspension or otherwise explain his/her actions.
 - b) The person who ordered or requested the removal must be at the hearing.
 - c) Within 24 hours of the decision to suspend or expel, the parent or custodian of the pupil and the Clerk of the Board will be notified in writing. The notice includes the right of the pupil OR parent to appeal to the Board of Education or designee, the right to be represented at the appeal and to request the hearing on appeal be held in executive session.
4. If the Superintendent or Principal reinstates a pupil prior to the hearing for emergency removal, the teacher may demand and shall be given written reasons for the reinstatement. The teacher cannot refuse to reinstate.
5. In an emergency removal, a pupil can be kept from class up to 24 hours or until the matter of his misconduct is disposed of either by reinstatement, suspension, or expulsion whereby due process for such will be followed.

RESPECT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

The Board of Education believes strongly that students should at all times display good standards of decent behavior and respect those individuals who are employed by the Board of Education. Students should also respect the property and the rights of school employees. If a student, at any time, demonstrates a disrespect for the property or person of a school employee, the Board of Education directs the Principal, Assistant Principal, Superintendent, or the Superintendent's designee to assign the following punishment: Suspension from school not to exceed ten days, expulsion from school for the remaining portion of the semester, or any combination of suspension and expulsion. Information concerning the offense will be given to the police for possible prosecution or rehabilitation.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Students are expected to conduct themselves in such a way that they respect and consider the rights of others. Students of the District must conform to school regulations and accept directions from authorized school personnel. The Board has “zero tolerance” of violent, disruptive or inappropriate behavior by its students.

A student who fails to comply with established school rules or with any reasonable request made by school personnel on school property and/or at school-related events is subject to approved student discipline regulations. The Superintendent/designee develops regulations that establish strategies ranging from prevention to intervention to address student misbehavior.

Students and parents annually receive, at the beginning of the school year or upon entering during the year, written information on the rules and regulations to which they are subject while in school or participating in any school-related activity or event. The information includes the types of conduct which are subject to suspension or expulsion from school or other forms of disciplinary action. The Board directs the administration to make all students aware of the student code of conduct and the fact that any violations of the student code of conduct are punishable.

If a student violates this policy or the code of conduct, school personnel, students or parents should report the student to the appropriate Principal. The administration cooperates in any prosecution pursuant to the criminal laws of the State of Ohio and local ordinances.

The Student Code of Conduct is made available to students and parents and is posted in a central location within each building.

DANCES

High School: After game dances are for the enjoyment of West Branch High School students only. The school dress code and student code of conduct are in effect.

Middle School: The Middle School has many dances throughout the year. These dances are only for West Branch Middle School students--no visitors or guests. The dances will have chaperones present. Tickets for dances are \$4.00 pre-sale, \$5.00 at the door.

DISPENSARY PROCEDURES

The dispensary is not equipped to handle neither long-term illness nor large numbers of students. Therefore, students should use the dispensary for one period only. If a student is unable to return to class, he/she should obtain the Principal's permission to go home. Before a student can be sent home, the parent or guardian must be contacted and consent obtained. A child will not be permitted to walk home or be taken home by another student or a brother or sister. The school is unable to provide transportation. Transportation in these cases is the responsibility of the parent or guardian. Students must first obtain a pass from their classroom or study hall teacher before reporting to the dispensary for admission.

DRESS CODE

The philosophy governing the dress and grooming practices for the students in the West Branch School District is based simply upon the principles of health, personal cleanliness and hygiene, good grooming, proper attire, and parental responsibility for their child/children's appearance. The citizens of the West Branch community take pride in the young men and women who attend their schools and are concerned about their appearance and well-being. Each parent is ultimately responsible for the action, appearance, and safety of his/her child. As new trends in fashion or dress occur, the District will review the changing standards of the community. Extremism will not be accepted and if that condition or status is reached in any aspect of the school, the action necessary to correct or alleviate that situation will be taken. Action will be taken according to the following guidelines:

- 1) Students are permitted to wear nylon sweat pants/gym shorts.
- 2) Clothing containing pictures and slogans which are suggestive (stated or implied), provocative, obscene, negative, or contains reference to tobacco, alcohol, drugs or are questionable in nature are unacceptable.
- 3) Men should be clean-shaven with moustaches neatly trimmed. Sideburns may not extend past the earlobes. Beards are not permitted. Coaches may set their own guidelines concerning facial hair.
- 4) Hair should be clean, combed, and worn in a fashion that does not hinder sight. No unnatural hair coloring is permitted.
- 5) Shorts may be worn during the entire school year.
- 6) Low cut dresses, sheer and/or fishnet clothing, tank tops, strapped undershirts and improperly fitted clothing, cut-offs, pajama attire, sanitary shorts, spandex biker shorts and other tight fitting clothing are not proper school attire. No bare midriff shirts will be allowed. Shoulders must be covered. Torn or ripped clothes are not appropriate.
- 7) Skirts, shorts, and pants must be of contemporary length; extremes in length (short or long) will be unacceptable. A rule of thumb signifying length is fingertip length or longer when standing with your hands to your side. Jeans, slacks, and shorts must be secured at the waist so that undergarments are covered.
- 8) Footwear is required at all school activities for all students.
- 9) Hats/hoods/head coverings are not to be worn in the building at any time. The only exception to this rule will be on special designated days.
- 10) Except for pierced ears, students may not display piercings on the face, tongue or other visible areas of the body during regular school hours. Gauges in the ears are not permitted.

11) Jackets/coats/book bags are to be put in your locker upon arrival at school. The mentioned items shall remain in your locker for the day.

12) Regulations for dress and grooming for individual classrooms or activities will be governed by the person in charge of the activities under the direction of the Principal.

13) It is within the providence of the building Principal to interpret appropriateness in all instances. The administration will be responsible for determining extremes in styles and the determination of what is in compliance with or noncompliance with the dress and grooming code.

Homecoming and Prom Dress Code:

- Girls are not permitted to wear dresses that are extremely low-cut in the front.
- Girls are permitted to wear two-piece dresses so long as the midriff is not exposed.
- Girls' dresses may have slits up the side so long as the slit does not extend higher than the girl's fingertips.
- Girls are not permitted to wear backless dresses or dresses where the back is completely exposed however cut out designs and Vs are acceptable.
- All dresses must be tasteful.
- Boys must wear a tuxedo/suit to the prom and dress shoes. Casual shoes are acceptable for Homecoming. Athletic shoes are not acceptable under any circumstance.
- No extremely tight clothing. (If you cannot move around without feeling restricted, your clothing is too tight.)

DRIVERS

Students who choose to drive to school must be licensed and show proof of insurance in order to receive a parking permit. A fee will be charged for the permit and it must be displayed while parked on school property. Students driving and parking in school lots do so at their own risk. Cars are not to be visited or moved during the school day. Student parking is confined to the north lot. Permits may be revoked for reckless operation, illegal parking, or other acts violating the student handbook. School authorities may search the person or property, including vehicles of a student, with or without consent, upon reasonable suspicion of a violation of law or school rules.

EIGHTEEN (18) YEARS OLD STATUS

Eighteen-year-olds will be treated the same as all other students and be expected to conform to all school rules and regulations including previously stated attendance procedures. Should they decide not to do so, they may exercise their option to leave school.

Failure to abide by school rules will result in counseling and signing a letter of intent. If after signing the letter of intent, the student's behavior, grades, or attendance doesn't improve, he may be withdrawn from school. The administration has the right under extreme circumstances to withdraw the eighteen-year-old before the signing of the letter of intent.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Electronic devices are only allowed at a teacher's request per classroom application. Otherwise all devices must be placed in the student's locker in the off position. Misuse of a device will result in disciplinary action and confiscation.

ELIGIBILITY - ATHLETIC AND EXTRA CURRICULAR

West Branch High School and Middle School are members of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and comply with all rules and regulations established by the Association. The eligibility standards of the OHSAA have been adopted by West Branch High School and Middle School. Knowing and following these standards will protect your athletic eligibility.

HIGH SCHOOL:

Do not change your schedule *without* first consulting with the Principal, athletic director, or guidance counselor to determine what effect it may have on your eligibility.

Eligibility for each grading period is determined by grades received by the preceding nine weeks. Semester and yearly averages have no effect on eligibility. You must be currently enrolled in school and have received passing grades in a minimum of five one-credit courses, or the equivalent, the immediately preceding nine weeks. You must also have a grade point average for the 9 weeks of at least 1.0. Summer school grades may not be used to substitute for failing grades received the final grading period of the regular school year or for lack of enough subjects taken the preceding grading period.

Athletic eligibility is a very important matter! Under these regulations, it is possible to pass all of the courses that you scheduled and still not be eligible for athletic competition.

If you have additional questions, see your guidance counselor or athletic director.

MIDDLE SCHOOL:

Rule 4-4-4 is written with regards to athletic eligibility and reads as follows: A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled and must have enrolled in the schools immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades during that grading period in 5 of the subjects carried.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities are extensions of the school program and are subject to the same rules and behavioral expectations as curricular/instructional activities. All school rules apply during and beyond school hours while on school grounds, buses, in buildings, and while under school sponsored and/or supervised activities. A student is not a member of a team, organization, or activity until chosen for membership, or having qualified and been selected for such.

Suspension or expulsion from a squad or organization can occur for the following reasons:

1. Failure to meet academic standards.
2. Failure to follow the directions of the coach or activity sponsor/supervisor.
3. Violation of training rules.
4. Misconduct and repeated violations of school rules and/or organization rules.
5. Insubordination.

Suspension or expulsion from extra-curricular activities, following review by the Principal or Superintendent is final and not subject to appeal.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

Students must be in attendance a minimum of one half of the school day to be eligible to participate in an extra-curricular activity that day. This includes both practice and contests. Exceptions will be made for school-sponsored activities, college visitations and extenuating circumstances with the approval of the administration.

FIELD TRIP

Students who have accumulated an excessive number of absences, as determined by the administration, will not be permitted to attend field trips.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Twenty-one (21) units of credit are required for graduation. Students are required to pass all parts of the Ohio Graduation Test in order to graduate.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

Guidance counselors help the student in understanding himself, solving personal problems, choosing a career, and planning his education. The guidance programs result in:

- 1) more students continuing education after high school through colleges, business, trade and technical schools, on-the-job and apprentice training, 2) better school course planning with fewer course changes and failures, 3) growth in students' self-understanding and self acceptance.

How can I see my Counselor? Students will find counselor sign-up sheets in the guidance office. You may sign up, giving your name, reason, period of study halls, and room number. The student will be called by his counselor as soon as possible. Students can best be served if we follow this procedure. Only in an extreme emergency or situation should a student expect to see a counselor immediately.

HALL TRAFFIC AND PASSES

Traffic in the hallways requires certain rules and common courtesy. Students should keep to the right side of the hallway in the direction in which they are moving. No pushing or shoving in the halls. The hallway is not a place for a social conference; therefore, please keep traffic moving.

No student should be in the hallway during class time without a clipboard pass from a specific teacher to a specific destination. Teachers will not honor passes unless the following steps are followed:

1. Must obtain a clipboard pass from a teacher.
 2. Must be completely filled out including the date, name, destination and time.
 3. Pass must be authorized by a teacher.
 4. The clipboard pass must accompany the student.
- NOTE: Students wanting a pass for another period will use their handbook pass filled out by a teacher. This is limited to two (2) times a day.

HARASSMENT, ANTI-INTIMIDATION OR BULLYING

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior by any student/school personnel in the West Branch Local School District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and or/expulsion from school.

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying”, in accordance with Ohio law, means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts including electronically transmitted acts i.e. Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held devices, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward one or more students/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school sponsored activity, on school provided transportation or at any official school bus stop that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

- Causing mental or physical harm to the other student/school personnel including placing and individual in reasonable fear of physical harm and/or damaging of students' personal property; and
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student/school personnel.

Anyone who witnesses or suspects that a student or adult is being harassed, intimidated or bullied in any way should report it immediately to the building principal.

HAZING

It is the policy of the West Branch Board of Education and School District that hazing activities of any types are inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited at all times. No administrator, faculty member, or other employee of the school district shall encourage, permit, condone, or tolerate any hazing activities. No student, including leaders of student organizations, shall plan, encourage, or engage in any hazing.

Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim to do any act of initiation onto any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

Administrators, faculty members, and all other employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events that might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, involved students shall be informed by the discovering school employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent.

Administrators, faculty members, students, and all other employees who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with Ohio Law.

HEALTH

Children attending public schools or nonpublic schools that meet state educational requirements must be immunized against chicken pox, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles (rubeola), mumps, rubella, and hepatitis B. Unless exempted from the immunization requirements, a child cannot be permitted to remain in school for more than 14 days unless the child presents written evidence satisfactory to the school of having received the required immunizations or being in the process of receiving the required immunizations. (R.C. 3313.671(A).)

All students entering Kindergarten will be required to have 2 Varicella (chicken pox) shots.

For most students their last Tetanus shot was when they went to Kindergarten, they will be required to have this booster before entering Grade 7.

For a complete listing of immunization requirements, visit the Ohio Department of Health website www.odh.ohio.gov

Vision and Hearing Screening: Throughout the year, vision and/or hearing screening will be done for first through fifth grade students and new students. These screenings follow recommendations by the Ohio Department of Health.

Body Mass Index: Students in grades K, 3, 5, and 9 will participate in a BMI assessment.

HONOR ROLL FOR ELEMENTARY

Each nine weeks students who receive two A's and nothing less than a B will be on the honor roll. All subjects are included. Students must have an O, S, or I in Art, Music, and Physical Education.

HONOR ROLL FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

Honor Roll will be determined by nine-week point averages. The following groups of students will be identified and communicated to the media for publication:

1. Students with a 4.00 (All-A's)
2. Students with 3.75-3.99 (Honor)
3. Students with a 3.5-3.74 (Merit)

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

All West Branch Middle School and High School students will be issued a Student Identification Card at the beginning of the school year for use throughout the year.

LIBRARY PROCEDURES FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

The capacity of the library is limited. Teachers reserve the right to use the library for classroom purposes. Students wishing to use the library should report to study hall. The study hall teacher will permit students to sign out to go to the library. Students must have their ID card with scanning label to gain entrance. Students needing to use the library for a specific class must have a pass from the teacher along with their student ID.

LOCKERS

All students at West Branch High School and Middle School will be assigned a locker in which you are expected to keep all books, coats, and book bags. Lockers are assigned to each student without charge and remain the property of the West Branch Board of Education. For your protection, it is best to **keep your locker secured at all times**. If you have any problems with your locker, fill out a locker concern form and return it to the office.

Misuse or abuse of lockers may result in a fine being assessed or require you to clean the locker. Lockers and students themselves are liable to search if, in the opinion of the administration, such search is necessary for the protection of the students and for maintenance of an orderly school environment. Students in physical education classes at the high school will

need to use locker room lockers. Students must bring their own lock from home to secure their gym locker. Do not bring large sums of money or articles of great value to school. NEVER leave money or valuables in the locker room lockers.

LOST AND FOUND

Any items found in the school will be placed in the lost and found location. After a reasonable period of time, unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

MEDICATION

Students may take medication only when it is properly distributed to them from office personnel. A school supplied medication form that has been signed by a physician and a parent must be on file. Other school personnel, such as teachers, will not distribute medication.

MESSAGES TO STUDENTS

Because it is very disruptive to the school environment and the educational process, phone messages will not be delivered to students during the course of the school day except in the case of extreme emergency. The delivery of flowers, balloons, or other non-school related items will not be done during school hours.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

The public display of affection during school or at extra curricular activities is not appropriate or acceptable. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

RESTROOMS

Students are to use the restroom in the morning, between classes, and at lunchtime. Students are advised to proceed to their next class to receive a written pass from their teacher so they will not be counted late for class.

SAFETY

Fire and tornado drills are held periodically throughout the school year. Emergency information sheets are posted in each room in the school so they can be easily referred to by teachers, students and visitors.

When the fire alarm rings, all students and teachers must leave the building quickly and quietly. Classroom lights should be turned off, windows closed and the door closed by the last person leaving the room. Each class is to walk in a single line to its designated spot outside of the building (for fire drills) or to assume the "safe" position in a designated area of the building (for storm drills). There, each class waits without talking until attendance is taken by the classroom teacher and the all-clear sign is given.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

After a student has made a decision about his course selection for each semester and year, with approval of all concerned, there shall be no change except for the following conditions:

1. Technical error beyond the student's responsibility.
2. Major change in student program.
3. Teacher recommends in writing, after consulting with student, parent, and counselor.
4. Counselor recommends in writing, after consulting with teacher, student, and parent.

After the 3rd full week of school, any student dropping a class will receive an F for that course and no credit unless one of the above rules applies.

When permission for a change is granted, the student will take a change form signed by the guidance counselor to the teacher whose class is being dropped for a signature. All materials issued (textbooks) must be returned at this time. The student will then take the change form to the added class or study hall and have the teacher in charge sign it. Then, the student should return the form to the guidance office. No schedule changes will be made to accommodate job schedules or other non-educational activities.

SMOKING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS/USE OF TOBACCO

O.R.C. 3313.751 prohibits the use or possession of tobacco (in any form) by pupils in any area under the control of a school district or any activity supervised by any school district.

1st offense: Out of school suspension of 3 days and mandatory attendance at educational seminar.

2nd offense: Out of school suspension of 5 days and mandatory attendance at an educational seminar.

3rd offense: Out of school suspension not to exceed 10 days with possible notification to the appropriate authorities.

TECHNOLOGY

The unauthorized use of technology is prohibited. Any inappropriate use of equipment or technology (software or hardware) will result in loss of privilege and disciplinary action. An Internet usage agreement form must be signed by the student and parents and be on file with the school before the student is authorized to access the Internet.

VISITORS

Parents are encouraged to visit the school at any time. No student visitors are permitted unless through an approved activity program. All visitors must obtain a visitor's pass from the office before going to any other area in the school building.

*****FERPA Guidelines for Parents can be viewed at www.ed.gov or the school website www.westbranch.k12.oh.us**

West Branch Local Schools Grading Scale

Kindergarten students receive an S (Satisfactory), D (Developing), I (Improvement Needed), and NA (Not yet Assessed) instead of letter grades, based on the Ohio Content Standards.

1st Grade uses the following scale:

- O Outstanding Progress
- S Satisfactory Progress
- I Improvement Needed
- U Unsatisfactory Progress

Students in grades 2-12 receive letter grades on their report cards.

A	Superior Work	100-93
B	Outstanding	92-85
C	Satisfactory	84-75
D	Below Average	74-65
F	Unsatisfactory	64-0

*Students at the High School must have passing grades in three of the six grading marks and meet the current grading scale requirements to receive credit in a yearlong course.

STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGN OFF SHEET

Please sign and return this form to your homeroom teacher by the second week of school.

A \$5.00 fee will be charged to replace a lost, stolen or damaged handbook.

By signing below, we certify that we have received, read, and understand the West Branch Student Handbook. We also understand that students must have an Internet use form on file at the school before they are authorized to use the Internet.

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

SCHOOL DAY FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Regular and two-hour delay schedules are listed below. Please visit the district or school web site for other special schedules.

SCHOOL DAY FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

The school day at West Branch for elementary students is 9:00 – 3:30. Supervision of students is not available until 8:45 am when they may enter the building. Parents picking up students at the end of the day must sign them out in the office by 3:15.

MIDDLE SCHOOL – REGULAR SCHEDULE

PER	6 th		7 th		8 th	
HR	7:37	7:57	7:37	7:57	7:37	7:57
1	7:59	8:40	7:59	8:58	7:59	8:43
2	8:42	9:23	9:00	9:58	8:45	9:44
3	9:25	10:25	10:00	10:58	9:46	10:28
4	10:27	11:28	11:00	11:30	10:30	11:00
5	11:30	12:00	11:32	12:31	11:02	12:00
6	12:02	1:02	12:33	1:14	12:02	1:00
7	1:04	2:04	1:16	1:57	1:02	2:00
8	2:06	2:42	1:59	2:42	2:02	2:42

MIDDLE SCHOOL - 2 HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE

PER	6 th		7 th		8 th	
HR	9:37	9:43	9:37	9:43	9:37	9:43
1	9:45	10:13	9:45	10:21	9:45	10:28
2	10:15	10:43	10:23	10:58	10:30	11:00
3	10:45	10:28	11:00	11:30	11:02	11:45
5	11:30	12:00	11:32	12:11	11:47	12:14
4	12:02	12:45	12:13	12:51	12:16	12:43
6	12:47	1:29	12:53	1:28	12:45	1:12
7	1:31	2:13	1:30	2:05	1:14	1:57
8	2:15	2:42	2:07	2:42	1:59	2:42

HIGH SCHOOL – REGULAR SCHEDULE

Per	TIMES	PER	TIMES
Warning Bell @ 7:45			
HR	7:48 – 7:53	8	11:21 – 11:44
1	7:56 – 8:38	9	11:47 – 12:09
2	8:41 – 9:01	10	12:12 – 12:35
3	9:03 – 9:23	11	12:38 – 12:58
4	9:26 – 9:46	12	1:00 – 1:20
5	9:48 – 10:08	13	1:23- 1:43
6	10:11 – 10:53	14	1:45 – 2:05
7	10:56 – 11:18	15	2:08 -2:50

HIGH SCHOOL - 2 HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE

PER	TIMES	PER	TIMES
Warning Bell @ 7:45			
HR	9:48 – 9:53	8	12:11 – 12:34
1	9:56 – 10:21	9	12:37 – 12:59
2	10:23 – 10:35	10	1:01 – 1:24
3	10:37 – 10:48	11	1:27 – 1:39
4	10:51 – 11:03	12	1:41 – 1:52
5	11:05 – 11:16	13	1:55 – 2:07
6	11:19 – 11:44	14	2:09 – 2:20
7	11:47 – 12:09	15	2:23 – 2:50